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TWO PRIZE STORIES FROM THE HIGH SCHOOL "MIMIR"

(Continued from Page 2.)

flying to the front of the house, although she had been determined not to meet him. But this morning she was rewarded by a letter. It was from dear old Billy, her school friend, to whom Rachel had poured out her heart a few days before. After glancing over the first page, Rachel's eyes brightened. Billy said that the Breckenridges of Boston were looking for a young girl to live with them as a sort of a companion for Mrs. Breckenridge. She had gone right to Mrs. Breckenridge (who was a dear friend of her mother's) and told her of Rachel. Mrs. Breckenridge said that since they passed through Rachel's home town the next day, they would stop off and make her acquaintance.

Rachel was all excitement.

"How glad Greg will be when I tell him tonight!"

Shortly after six he came wearily up the front walk to the porch. He was met by a radiant sister, fresh and lovely in a spotless white dress.

"Greg, just read this!" she cried and spread Billy's letter out before him. "It means that I could spend a winter in Boston and probably have a chance to study my music again. There's only one thing that worries me—what to wear on Thursday."

Greg laughed. "What to wear! There's a woman for you! I'd be more interested in what to eat!"

"I'm going to have my washerwoman's daughter come over and help with the lunch, she is a fine cook."

Thursday evening as Gregory hurried up to the porch he was met by Rachel. She wore a white dress with ruffles and her cheeks were flushed.

"Is it good news, little sister?" asked Gregory as he came up.

Rachel took his hand and led him back to the kitchen.

"No, Greg, I'll tell you about it while I prepare dinner. First, I didn't make a good impression. My dress was not correctly made and I was so tired after sewing half the night. And worse than all, Anna isn't a good cook. The chicken was tough and the custard tasted scorched, and while waiting on the table she spilled gravy on Mr. Breckenridge's coat. The house was full of flies, because she had propped the door open while I was out. Everything went wrong—I was just a plain little dub! After all that do you think they asked me to come to Boston to be Mrs. Breckenridge's companion?"

"But you haven't told me how you liked the Breckenridges. Was the impression of general undesirability mutual?"

"Greg, that's the worst of it. They are perfectly lovely people. They thanked me so cordially when they left and said their plans for the winter were entirely unsettled."

"Never mind, dear," Gregory replied, "you did it for me and I appreciate it—I wonder who that is?" The door bell had pealed out sharply.

"No company, I hope," said Rachel. "I was getting ready to make waffles for dinner. I'll go, Greg."

Her light steps sounded on the bare floors and Gregory heard her speaking to someone. He wished afterward he had been there to see the expression on his sister's face when she opened the door and found herself face to face, once more, with Mr. Breckenridge.

"No doubt you are surprised to see me again, Miss Haviland," he said, stopping inside the little hall, "please let me explain. Our train was wrecked near Clevedale about four o'clock, and while we were not hurt, several other passengers were. I hired a car to bring my mother back here. I could see that the excitement was making her ill, and I knew the ride would revive her. I found that we could obtain a sleeper on the train leaving here at midnight, and thought, all things considered, it was best to return. And now," anxiously, "may I bring my mother in to stay with you a few hours? I will return to the hotel, of course—". Here he was interrupted.

"Please come in both of you! We are going to have waffles for dinner, brother and I. Won't you stay and meet my brother?"

"This is unpardonable—coming in for your hospitality twice in succession; but I'm coming. The brother and waffles are too tempting. Let me go out and tell mother." Gregory had heard everything and now came hurrying out.

"But Rachel," he said in an excited whisper, "there is no fire in any room but the kitchen."

"I know it, but never mind, it's all right. I'm going to be sensible this time."

And so the Breckenridges were ushered out into the kitchen. Mrs. Breckenridge, sitting in the Morris chair, was laughing heartily at Gregory's jokes. Mr. Breckenridge, with an apron tied around his neck, was beating eggs in a deep bowl. Rachel was here, there, and everywhere, all excitement.

Mr. Breckenridge followed her into the pantry once, saying, "I cannot tell you how much I appreciate this. My mother is not strong, you know, and one cannot tell what excitement will do her heart—the wreck was really terrible."

"I'm glad, so very glad you brought her here."

Dinner was almost ready by this time. The waffles were a lovely brown.

"Flowers!" cried Rachel. "I must get the pink roses."

She flew into the hall, where the roses were, but stopped short before she reached them. The hall lamp, which was suspended from the ceiling, had been burning alright when the people left the hall, but the door had been left open and the draft had caused the smoke and flame to pour out of the chimney. Rachel's first idea was to scream for help, but just then she remembered Mrs. Breckenridge's weak heart, so she drew the lamp down and tried to turn down the wick. This caused the flame to run down the wick and she knew as soon as it reached the oil it would explode. She took it from its bracket with stiff hands, ran to the front door and threw it out on the wet grass. Just as it seemed about to explode, young Breckenridge ran out from behind and poured a pail of loose dirt on the burning pile. The smoke curled slowly upward. It was gone.

He drew a long breath. "I followed you out here to ask where to find the sugar [illegible], and saw you rushing to the door with the burning lamp. Why didn't you call for help?"

"Why, I couldn't have without alarming your mother."

The young man turned, facing her in the darkness. "Well!" he said, and there was a strange note in his voice. "Well!"

The two went back to the dining room and Rachel succeeded in telling of the incident in such a way as to make it seem as if there was after all but little danger. During the recital, however, Clarence Breckenridge's and Gregory's eyes met in a knowing glance.

The little supper was a great success, and the dishwashing was accomplished in a gale of laughter, after which they sat and talked until the taxicab called for the guests [illegible].

When they had gone, Rachel and Gregory [illegible] to the kitchen to [illegible] things up for the night. Rachel's face [illegible] her [illegible] eyes were bright.

"Mrs. Breckenridge [illegible] young lady [illegible]," she told him as she finished closing the kitchen [illegible] and Mr. Breckenridge said they would write soon. [illegible] perfect [illegible] for a [illegible] Greg!"

"[illegible] what [illegible] Gregory [illegible] mine, I [illegible] of [illegible] all the way through."

"[illegible] only [illegible] have learned [illegible] being a [illegible] in a round hole, today."

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